

Scott Westcott - Competitive Edge Interview Number 4

Competitive Edge Biographical

Date of Birth?

25/9/75

Place of Birth?

Parkes NSW!!!

Currently Living?

Merewether in Newcastle, just down from the beach!!

Sponsors?

Puma

Martial Status (name of your partner if you have one)?

Married to Jessica!

Occupation (if you are unlucky enough to have one)?

High school teacher, Agriculture, science, maths, PE and anything else..

Height?

179cm I think!

Weight?

Hmmm, usually around 64kgs - maybe at my recovery weight now.

Shoe Size?

Hello?

Hair colour?

Naturally brown - no grey yet

Favourite shoe colour?

Pink (ie; the good old pink air mariah)

Favourite Race?

Any marathon at the moment. In Australia the Sydney Half.

Your top 3 running experiences/performances?

1. Beating Joseph Waweru in a State League 5k in 13.33.
2. Running 2.11.36 in Beppu.
3. Beating Daniel Green amongst others in the 1992 NSW CHS Open 5000m. I ran 15.08, 4 days after Greeny smoked me in the annual Dubbo Zoo Run (8km) by a good 35 secs!!

Personal Bests for your favourite distances?

800 (1.53.4), 1500 (3.44.4), 3000 (7.55), 5000 (13.33), 10000 (28.19), Half Marathon (63.03), Marathon (2.11.36)



Left: Scott Westcott leading Martin Dent on his way to victory in the 2004 Australian Cross Country Champs. Right: Scott Westcott just metres after finishing 3rd in the 2004 Sydney Morning Herald Half Marathon.

Competitive Edge Interview

CE - Scott, you have recently run 2.11.36 and finished 2nd at the Beppu marathon (Japan) to post a World Championships and Commonwealth Games qualifying time? Can you talk us through the race? How did it unfold? From your splits it looked like you may have been in the second group, when did you start running down guys from the front pack? How were you feeling during the race? Did it help having the familiar face of Sisay Bezahab in the race with you?

SW - What a loaded question! Yep, It is very satisfying to finally have that all important A-Qualifier, the race was really a product of a good couple of years consistent marathon training without any hold-ups through injury. The race began with 3 packs. The first, led out by Get Thys, was heading for a halfway split of 63.50. That was obviously a little quick thinking that my best split to halfway to date was 66.02. The second group had two pace makers till 25k. We went through half way in 64.37 and I remember doing some quick calculations and thinking that unless I fall apart dramatically I should be able to nail a 2.10 or 2.11 at least. The 25 km point could not come quick enough as we had been promised a tailwind for the final 17km after the 25km turnaround. Unfortunately there was a strong headwind instead and the trip home was going to be ugly. From 25-30km Sisay and I pushed the pace along and we ran 15.39 for the split. Not too bad but we were obviously starting to slow. Although I felt the ping in my legs I felt like I could have charged off if I wanted to. Thankfully I resisted this urge and led the pack through from 30 - 35km. This was a 16.09 split due partly to the wind and nobody wanted to lead, occasionally I would go to the back of the group (8 at this stage) but the pace would only slow. I figured I was not going to throw away a good time just

to play cat and mouse in the "B Pack" so I was content to push from the front. At the 36k drink station two Japanese runners (including a 2.07 guy who came 3rd) made a break. I got my drink down then ran up to them, in the process we had dropped the other boys in our group including Sisay. I remember trying to fire these two guys up by yelling Kambare (fight!!). By 38km we had hauled in 3 runners from the front group and I had moved away from the two Japanese that had led out the break. I was in 2nd but could not for the life of me see anyone in front!! Anyway I enjoyed the last 4km as much as you can in a marathon, the pace dropped but the cadence didn't. I am still hanging on to my record of never being passed in a marathon.

CE - Your race in Beppu caps off a remarkable progress in the marathon for you over the previous two years. Can you walk us through your marathons thus far? What events have you run? What time did you run? What place did you finish?

SW - Fukuoka Dec 03, 2.17.58, 20th
London Apr 04, 2.13.30, 14th
Chicago Oct 04, 2.13.08, 8th
Beppu Feb 05, 2.11.36, 2nd

CE - Given that you have just run 2.11.36 (15th fastest Australian of all-time), do you have a time bouncing around in the back of your mind that you would like to now run, that is, what is your next goal marathon time if you have one?

SW - To continue to progress. I feel I have arrived where I have always wanted to be (a competitive marathoner). I want to be a good marathon racer, not just runner. I know if this is my focus then the times can take care of themselves. Unfortunately conditions, the course and a group to run with make a big difference to times and you cannot control all these.

CE - There was recently a lengthy discussion on CoolRunning about the top ten distance runners of NSW. You were an inclusion in most people's list. I am sure that there would no longer be any doubt that you belong on this list, a remarkable achievement considering you are just now entering what will hopefully be the prime of your running career. How does it make you feel to be included in such a list at such a young age?

SW - Young?! Funny what some people consider young hey?! Yeah, running is a sport where patience is required. I have figured this out the hard way like most of us. In terms of being part of an elite list, I do not really want to think about that, there is plenty of work to do and these next few years I know are my best to I am determined not to waste them. "You don't count your money when your sitting at the table, there'll be time enough for counting, when the dealings done".

CE - What are your plans now for the rest of 2005 and 2006? Do you hope to run the World Championships marathon and then the Commonwealth Games marathon?

SW - Yes! I would love to run either or, or both of these. A World Championships would be great, to race a championship race before the spotlight falls on Melbourne.

Obviously I will try and do all I can to maximise my chances of selection for Melbourne.

CE - Like most of Australia's distance runners you work full time and fit your training in around your work. The competitive edge knows that you are a high school teacher. How do the demands of this job effect your running? Are there any advantages to this job, besides finding your future wife?

SW - I don't know what you mean there but in terms of working, I like working most of the time. Those busy few weeks when reports are being written and exams are being set and marked are difficult but you get there. Having time to train in daylight in the winter months is a bonus, I just have to do a bit of class prep after which is sometimes a struggle. Probably the best part of my job is encouraging young people in all aspects of life, not just in their studies.

CE - How has your life changed since marrying the lovely Jess?

SW - I have run some bloody good marathons!!! I guess I know that she loves me no matter what, I don't think I put as much pressure on myself to justify my existence through running. I eat a lot better these days and I am never short of a friend to go out to coffee with!

CE - You were in Canberra for quite a few years and have now recently moved back to Newcastle so you can be close to Jess as she finishes off her university degree in Occupational Therapy. How do you find training in Newcastle? Will you miss training with the larger group of athletes that are in Canberra, or can you see advantages to completing more training on your own?

SW - I miss Canberra, but I am loving Newcastle. Jess is close to uni and is a lot happier. She is also doing a little running and recently dropped me on a hill! I will miss the people in Canberra probably the most - there will be a few lonely runs up here but I should find company a couple of times a week, Simon Hurt, Wayne Bristow and Dave Rundle! As a marathoner the consistency is more important than the intensity and I am not struggling for motivation at this point.

CE - You were previously living in Newcastle when you originally made your big break through onto the Australian distance running scene. If memory serves me correctly, you took over 25 seconds off your 3000m time, close to a minute off your 5000m time and close to 90 seconds off your 10000m time in one season. What factors do you think contributed to this break through?

SW - A couple of years doing 3 solid sessions and 140-160km per week. Up until I left uni at 22 I was only doing 2 sessions per week at 90 - 110km per week so the increase in training load during '98 and '99 unveiled a bit of potential. It took 2 years to come out however.

CE - Some readers may not be aware that you are quite a religious person. What religion are you a part of and in what capacity?

SW - I am a Christian and I have a relationship with Jesus. I talk to him all the time in Prayer, he guides me through the day and gives me hope for the future. I run because I believe He gave me this ability and I want to use that gift honourably as a way of thanking him. Jess and I attend my father in law's church in Maitland where she often leads the singing and I 'hack' on guitar!

CE - And finally, a couple of questions regarding your training. Even in distance running circles you are considered to be a runner who trains very hard. What did your normal week look like in the lead up to the Beppu marathon?

SW - hmm, there were different phases. 10-6 weeks out I was doing this;

Mon - 10km and 16km

Tue - 10km and 10 x 3min or 5 x 2k

Wed - 10k and 16km

Thu - 30km including 2x 15 min hard

Fri - 16km and rest

Sat - 20x 1min on/1min off or 30 x 30sec on/30 sec off.

Sun - 2.5 - 3hrs

I spent 3 weeks at Falls creek where I did the traditional training week. Mona Fartlek, 8x400/200 and Fitzies hut, along with Spion Copje and Pretty Valley long runs.

CE - Running over 200km per week, how does your body manage to stay in one peice? Are you often sore? How many niggles do you tend to get and how do you manage to keep these in check?

SW - Morning runs are often set at a blistering pace of 6min per km early on before loosing up to around 5min per km!! I try and get massage one per fortnight but has not been regular lately. I try and run a fair bit on the grass and take the easy days easy! I do get niggles from time to time and manage these by taking a day or half a day off if need be. At the end of the day I have had a terrific run over the past 2half years which is as much luck or God's Blessing as it is good management.

CE - Thanks from The Competitive Edge and once again congratulations on your outstanding run, we look forward to cheering madly for you in your next marathon.

SW - Thankyou and I encourage those who are plugging away to keep plugging away, I have been for 19 years.